

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended)      A tissue approximation device comprising two elongate arms, an attachment means to secure the elongate arms to each other at one or more locations, adhesive pads movably connected on the ends of the elongate arms to anchor the tissue approximation device to the skin, and a locking means to lock the elongate arms in place relative to each other, wherein (i) the adhesive pads are spaced apart from the one or more locations of the attachment means in the direction of the elongate arms, and (ii) the tissue approximation device has an open and a closed position, and when in the closed position, the adhesive pads are parallel and non-contiguous to each other.
2. (Cancelled)
3. (Withdrawn)      The tissue approximation device of claim 1, where the elongate arms form parallel forceps, the attachment means is a pair of slidable bosses, and the locking means is a ratchet mechanism on the forceps.
4. (Withdrawn)      The tissue approximation device of claim 3, where the distance between the elongate arms is adjustable by means of a ratchet mechanism.
5. (Original)      The tissue approximation device of claim 1, where the elongate arms form a pair of forceps, the attachment means is a yoke on the forceps, and the locking means is a ratchet mechanism on the forceps.
6. (Original)      The tissue approximation device of claim 5, where the distance between the elongate arms is adjustable by means of a ratchet mechanism.
7. (Withdrawn)      The tissue approximation device of claim 3, where the adhesive pad has a first adhering surface and a second surface having a socket mechanism that communicates with a ball on the distal end of each of the elongate arms, and the adhesive pad is optionally rotatable around the ball.

8. (Original)            The tissue approximation device of claim 5, where the adhesive pad has a first adhering surface and a second surface having a socket mechanism that communicates with a ball on the distal end of each of the elongate arms, and the adhesive pad is optionally rotatable around the ball.

9. (Withdrawn)        The tissue approximation device of claim 3, where the adhesive pad has a first adhering surface and a second surface having a ball that communicates with a socket mechanism on the distal end of each of the elongate arms.

10. (Original)        The tissue approximation device of claim 5, where the adhesive pad has a first adhering surface and a second surface having a ball that communicates with a socket mechanism on the distal end of each of the elongate arms.

11. (Withdrawn)      The tissue approximation device of claim 3, where the adhesive pad has a first adhering surface and a second surface having female receiving mechanism that communicates with a male protrusion on the distal end of each of the elongate arms.

12. (Original)        The tissue approximation device of claim 5, where the adhesive pad has a first adhering surface and a second surface having female receiving mechanism that communicates with a male protrusion on the distal end of each of the elongate arms.

13. (Withdrawn)      The tissue approximation device of claim 3, where the adhesive pad has a first adhering surface and a second surface having a male protruding mechanism that communicates with a female receiving mechanism on the distal end of each of the elongate arms.

14. (Original)        The tissue approximation device of claim 5, where the adhesive pad has a first adhering surface and a second surface having a male protruding mechanism that communicates with a female receiving mechanism on the distal end of each of the elongate arms.

15. (Withdrawn) The tissue approximation device of claim 3, where the distal end of each of the elongate arms has a passageway therein such that the adhesive pad communicates with said passageway.

16. (Original) The tissue approximation device of claim 5, where the distal end of each of the elongate arms has a passageway therein such that the adhesive pad communicates with said passageway.

17. (Withdrawn) The tissue approximation device of claim 3, where the adhesive pad has a passageway therein such that the distal end of each of the elongate arms is within said passageway.

18. (Original) The tissue approximation device of claim 5, where the adhesive pad has a passageway therein such that the distal end of each of the elongate arms is within said passageway.

Claims 19-20. (Canceled)

21. (Currently Amended) A method for closing a wound in the surface of a patient's skin, comprising the steps of

(1) providing a tissue approximation device comprising two elongate arms, an attachment means to secure the elongate arms to each other at one or more locations, ~~adhesive pads on the ends of the elongate arms to anchor the tissue approximation device to the skin~~, and a locking means to lock the elongate arms in place relative to each other, wherein providing the tissue approximation device includes connecting an adhesive pad to an end of each elongate arm and adjusting a position of each pad relative to the skin surface, wherein (i) the adhesive pads are spaced apart from the one or more locations of the attachment means in the direction of the elongate arms, and (ii) the tissue approximation device has an open and a closed position, and when in the closed position, the adhesive pads are parallel and non-contiguous to each other;

(2) positioning the adhesive pads to skin on opposed sides of a wound;

(3) approximating the wound by actuating the tissue approximation device in a direction to move the adhesive pads towards each other in a common plane that is generally parallel to the skin tissue;

(4) engaging the locking means to assure that the edges ~~surfaces~~ of the wound do not move;

(5) applying a topical skin closure adhesive to the wound; and

(6) removing the adhesive pads from the skin surface ~~tissue~~.

22. (New) A tissue approximation device for application to a skin surface adjacent to a wound, comprising:

a pair of arms, each arm having a longitudinal axis and opposed ends, wherein one end includes a handle and the other end includes a tong with a connector;

an attachment mechanism coupled to each arm that movably couples the arms to each other so that a distance between each tong is selectively variable;

an adhesive pad removably coupled to the connector of each tong, wherein each adhesive pad has an adhesive surface that extends in a plane generally parallel to the longitudinal axis of the respective tong, the adhesive surface having a high shear resistance for holding the skin surface and a low peel resistance for removal from the skin surface, and wherein the connectors support the adhesive pads to be positionable in a common plane on opposed sides of the wound and conform to the skin surface adjacent to the wound; and

a locking mechanism coupled to each arm to selectively lock the pair of arms in a fixed position relative to each other.

23. (New) The device of claim 22, wherein the connector is a pivotal connector that connects the adhesive pad to the tong to pivot about the longitudinal axis of the respective arm.

24. (New) The device of claim 23, wherein the pivotal connector is one of a rod and a sleeve and the adhesive pad includes the other of the rod and the sleeve, wherein the rod and the sleeve are slidably coupled together in a press fit manner.
25. (New) The device of claim 22, wherein the connector is a rotatable connector that connects the adhesive pad to the tong to pivot at least about the longitudinal axis and an axis substantially perpendicular to the longitudinal axis.
26. (New) The device of claim 25, wherein the rotatable connector is one of a ball and a socket and the adhesive pad includes the other of the ball and the socket, wherein the ball and socket are snap fit together in an interference fit.
27. (New) The device of claim 22, wherein the arms are connected in a scissors configuration.
28. (New) The device of claim 22, wherein the adhesive pad includes serrations that provide flexibility to the adhesive surface.
29. (New) The device of claim 22, wherein the locking mechanism includes a ratchet.
30. (New) The device of claim 22, wherein the arms are made of a resilient material.
31. (New and withdrawn) The device of claim 22, wherein the arms are connected in a parallel configuration.
32. (New and withdrawn) The device of claim 31, wherein the attachment mechanism includes at least one pair of slidable bosses coupled between the arms.
33. (New and withdrawn) The device of claim 32, further comprising a spring disposed between the arms to bias the arms with respect to each other.